

Arlington

MASTER COMPOSTERS

Forty-First Edition

September 2003

The MASTER COMPOSTER Program of Arlington is in partnership with Texas to dramatically decrease yard and household waste going to landfills by inspiring and educating our citizens to reduce, recycle, and reuse.

ShadeKeepers

Please join us in September for a special presentation by Mr. Mike Bradshaw of the Dallas Trees and Parks Foundation.

Mr. Bradshaw is a Texas A&M graduate in landscape architecture with over twenty years experience in landscape design, planning, landscape construction and landscape maintenance. He has been with the Dallas Trees and Parks Foundation since 1992 and the Executive Director since 1994.

Mr. Bradshaw will be with us to discuss the social, community, environmental and economic benefits of trees.

He will also speak about ShadeKeepers, a special program of the Dallas Trees and Parks Foundation for the planting and maintenance of trees, and conservation and restoration of our natural environment, through education and public awareness. ShadeKeepers is the Foundation's response to environmental challenges ranging from global warming and deforestation, to urban blight and economic and social disintegration.

For more information contact Lorrie Anderle at 817-459-6778 or anderlel@c.arlington.tx.us

**Please note:
SPECIAL
MEETING
NIGHT**

**When:
Tuesday, September 9**

**Where:
201 E. Abram Street,
2nd floor**

**Time:
7:00 pm**

Despite the heat, the annual Arlington Master Composter picnic was well attended. Over 40 attended the picnic on July 10th at the Hatley's in southwest Arlington.

As always, the Hatley's were terrific hosts. THANK YOU James and Helen.



John Darling wins

Environmental Vision Award

John was recently nominated for and won the Tarrant County Corporate Recycling Council's Environmental Vision Award in the "Individual" category for his outstanding leadership in the Arlington community. As you may or may not know, John Darling is an environmentalist unafraid of tackling all sorts of projects. One recent project that comes to mind is the Arlington 4th of July parade for which he organized a complete recycling program for the 40,000 patrons who attended the parade.

Not only is John an Arlington Master Composter, but he is an active member of the Arlington Conservation Council and works closely with multiple organizations such as the University of Texas at Arlington, the City of Arlington Landfill and Parks & Recreation Departments, the Arlington Organic Garden Club and the Native Plants Society (to name a few).

We are extremely proud and happy to have John as a Master Composter and believe he is a worthy of this recognition.

CALENDAR of Events

September 6 — 2-hour class and work day at Veteran's Park

September 9, 2003 — General Membership Meeting

September 13 — 2-hour composting class and work day at River Legacy Living Science Center

September 20 — Trinity Trash Bash

October 4 — Two-hour class and work day at Veteran's Park

October 11 — 2-hour composting class and work day at River Legacy Living Science Center

October 25 — Fall Cleanup Day

November 15 — Computer and Electronics Collection Event

A message from the backyard compost program coordinator

I need to take a moment to thank everyone who worked so hard this summer keeping the demonstration sites "working." It was a good summer for my family, but unfortunately I had little time to devote to composting. Now that school has started and life is a little more routine, I should have more opportunities to join you on Saturday mornings.

We have some exciting volunteer opportunities coming up this fall. I am especially excited about the computer and electronics recycling event in November.

— Lorrie Anderle



Does Litter Bug You?



Report roadside litter by calling Neighborhood Services at 817-459-6777. Our automated phone line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. When you call, we will need a description of the location and type of litter. A litter crew will be dispatched within 5 working days.

Litter on private property may also be reported to Neighborhood Services. Please provide us with the property address when you call.

Report litterers who toss things out of their vehicle through the Don't Mess With Texas GOTCHA! program.



The GOTCHA! program allows Texans to report anyone they observe tossing things out of their vehicle or accidentally littering from an uncovered load.

All you need to do is write down the following: the license plate number (Texas plates only), make of the vehicle, time of day, location, who (driver, passenger or accidental) tossed the trash and the item littered.

After you've rounded up a handful of these pesky litterers, you can submit the information by calling 888-TEX-8683 or by logging on to www.dontmesswithtexas.org/gotcha. When TxDOT receives the information it is compared to their vehicle registration database and an exact match is located. A letter is mailed to the litterer along with a Don't Mess with Texas litterbag to remind them to put their trash where it belongs.

Compost Chat and Chew

by Jane Borland

Hello my friends and fellow composters! When Lorrie sent me the reminder that it was time for newsletter articles again, I told her I was running out of things to say about compost. I've been writing this article for several years now, and there's just so much a body can say about turning grass and leaves into gold. So.... since we are approaching fall, those of you that have been around for a while know that my students and I are gearing up for monarch migration season.

You may have already noticed a number of monarchs in your yard. We seem to have a very early reproductive group here already. We have been finding eggs and caterpillars on the milkweed in the school garden for about a month now. If you have tropical milkweed in your yard or the native species nearby, go out and check it. I am attaching pictures of the



eggs and caterpillars for reference.

The migratory adults begin leaving the northern states around Labor Day and begin entering Texas in large groups a couple of weeks into September. This continues until the end of November.

Monarchs cannot fly at night or in bad weather, so if you should have a large group (30+) roosting in your yard in a tree at night, please call me. They will start coming in around dusk and will stay in the trees in the morning until their body temperatures warm up. My students and I are tag-

ging migratory monarchs and collecting data, so if you discover a large group in the evening, I would like to know. During the week, I have to be at school before 7 a.m., so I would need to come over in the evening. On the weekend, I could come in the morn-

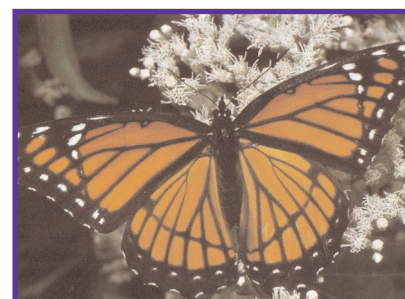
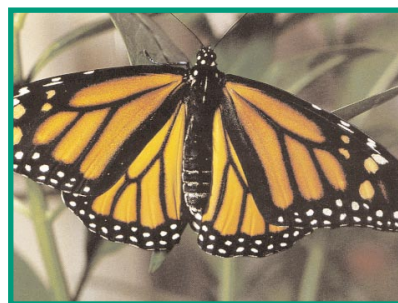
ing as well. My home phone # is 817-460-4582. My cell phone # is 214-232-0601.

Since some people confuse monarchs with viceroys, I am attaching pictures of them so you can tell the difference. Regardless of whether you get a

lot or just a few, enjoy them while they are here!

(left: female Monarch)

(below: Viceroy)



The Crotchety Composter by John Darling

News from Abroad

There I was a couple of weeks ago, sweating freely at an elegant resort near Puerto Vallarta. (My wife's work; it's a dirty job but somebody's got to carry the luggage.) An army of workers were mowing and bagging a zillion acres of grass and ground cover. I asked a groundskeeper what would happen to all that great green stuff. "Garbage," he said, wondering if the extremely moist gringo was having heatstroke. Turned out the groundskeeper knew



Just a few of the many bags of clippings all lined up and ready to be thrown away at a Mexican resort.



Well-used recycling bins on Mallorca. From left to right, plastic, glass, paper, and paper again.



Closeup of the only full bin: Wine bottles as far as the eye can see. If only they could make it taste like Coca Cola!

a lot about compost and was aware that his bosses were wasting valuable raw materials. He would know, too, because so many of the local people have relied on subsistence farming for generations. It must feel strange to do things right at home, then go to work and be paid to do the same things wrong.

In contrast, last June I learned how to tell if you're looking at a glass recycling bin in Europe. Give up? (Answer: It's full of fancy-looking wine bottles.)

Grand Prairie's Deluxe Compost Site

The other day Stephen Smith and I went over to Grand Prairie's compost site to gather background information for a possible new site in Arlington. What's Grand Prairie got that we don't? In fact, their compost site is big enough for a storage building, a community garden, and a public dropoff area for leaves and grass. It's right next to a high school, so students can build and turn piles for extra credit. Their workdays are

even scheduled during the week just as school lets out. Our focus was on the pros and cons of the public dropoff site, which will require some careful thought: Stay tuned for more on this.

The Home Front

Do you ever wonder how Lorrie's efforts with leaves and Christmas trees turned out last fall? What sort of homeowner would take the trouble to carry leaf bags to either dropoff site when the trash collectors would pick them up? Composters wouldn't participate, of course, so who's left? Someone who doesn't want the leaves but who doesn't want them in the landfill? (Dropoff leaves went to a composting facility.) Or people who don't want them piled on the lawn until garbage day? Well, here's a pleasant surprise: 90 tons of leaves were collected at the dropoff sites from November 2002 through February 2003. And over 86 tons of Christmas trees were recycled.

This year there will be curbside Christmas tree collection again, along with dropoff sites at both Calloway's Nurseries, and the city plans to add two more leaf dropoff sites. It's not curbside leaf pickup, but somehow it seems to be working. Who are those people?

Odd backyard composting note: I read somewhere that you can use the contents of vacuum bag and dryer lint in your pile. Vacuum bags are a messy business—cat hair and powdery dust everywhere. Lately I put in some multicolored dryer lint and liked the way it looked so much that I feel compelled to share the sight with you.



The dropoff area at Grand Prairie's compost site with a bit of the big storage building on the right. Will we have something like this someday?



My dryer lint collection poised to become compost. Or maybe not, but does anyone have a more colorful pile?

But I'm Not Worthy

On August 14 I missed a free lunch and the chance to be embarrassed by receiving the 2003 Tarrant County Corporate Recycling Council's Environmental Vision Award in the Individual Category. Lorrie put them up to it, but would not admit that it was a blatant misuse of her authority. I am uncharacteristically humbled and truly thankful. To all the people in Master Composters and other civic groups who make a difference, you're an inspiration. (Boy, sincerity is really tough; no wonder I avoid it.)

Volunteer Opportunities

■ **Help at demonstration sites** – We are in need of folks to help turn piles on Saturday mornings especially on class days. There are volunteers at both sites every Saturday but class day at the River Legacy demonstration site is the second Saturday of every month and the first Saturday at Veteran's Park. We could also use **grass clippings and leaves** at the demonstration sites.

■ **Trinity River Trash Bash** – This event will take place on Saturday, September 20, 2002 from 9 to 11:00 am at four locations this year. In a previous newsletter, I mentioned that the Master Composters had been assigned to the River Legacy East park but since then, the Parks Department has asked us if we minded trading sites. So we will be sponsoring the Lynn Creek site instead. Because there are more sites this year, we need more Master Composter because we are responsible for the site. Free breakfast provided to volunteers and participants.

■ **Texas Recycles Day – Computer and Electronics Roundup** - Saturday, November 15 the City will celebrate Texas Recycles Day by hosting a computer and electronics recycling event. The event will be held at the UTA parking lot at the corner of Mitchell and Cooper. We will need volunteers to help with surveys and traffic.

If you're interested in volunteering, please contact Lorrie Anderle at 817-459-6778 or anderlel@ci.arlington.tx.us.

Typical workday at the River Legacy demonstration site:

Photographer:
John Presson



Back: John Presson, Ray Buckingham, Nancy Hagwood, Charlie Shiner. Front: Rachel Presson, Rebecca Presson, Frances Presson, Dominique Presson, Ginny Buckingham



Rebecca with Frances Presson, while Rachel and Dominique give each other a high-five!



Jane Borland struggles with some pondweed that was mysteriously delivered to the compost site, while Ray waters the "pile".



Honorary Junior master composters: Rachel, Rebecca and Dominique Presson. They even have their own pile!



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